

Hours

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The actual event happened in mere minutes. As soon as they all got in the water it began to bubble. The bubbles rose out of the water and up the cone of the magnificent volcano. They all looked up at the full moon and awed at its beauty. After one last look they took a breath and dove under the water. They didn't know what events they had just set into motion. Escape was the only thing they had in mind.

The first hour Cleo thought she was still dreaming. Sleeping happily in her warm bed waiting for the alarm to tell her she was going to be late. Cleo reached down to touch the huge orange tail that protruded from the bubbles in her bath. She was terrified of it, of herself. She wondered if it would ever go away or if she would have to roll down the stairs like this to eat breakfast. Her phone began to vibrate madly in her room she could hear it. It had to be Emma freaking out over the same thing. Cleo already knew how this had happened. She knew there was a reason she had such an awful feeling the entire time she was in that cave. This just made her life a whole lot more complicated.

Emma woke up early and went on her daily jog. Being on the swim team was hard work and she loved every second of it. It was the weekend so instead of getting ready for school like she normally would when she returned home she put on a bathing suit and went out on the beach. It was still early enough that very few people were actually on the smooth sand. She breathed in the salty air and placed her things in the sand. She ran full out and jumped into the cold surf. She swam a ways out before she started to feel a weird tingling sensation. She looked down and her body had transformed. Her bathing suit was gone

and an orange tail had appeared. She looked around to see if anyone was around, but the beach was empty. She tried to swim to shore. Overestimating her strength she torpedoed out of the water and through the sand. She crawled to her bag and called Cleo. Hoping she could help her off the beach.

Rikki was still new to this town and bored out of her mind. It was nothing like the other cities she had lived in. Sure school was the same, but there wasn't anything to do here. She walked through a park kicking at the grass. Her foot hit one of the sprinklers and she heard the rest of them start up. She held up her hands and luckily only one drop hit her. She flung it off angrily then fell to the ground face first. She looked around confused, then at her tail. It was unreal. She rolled out of range of the sprinklers and sat in the sun until it went away. That had been a first for her. She wondered why it hadn't happened when she showered earlier that morning.

The second hour brought Kim to the bathroom door. She yelled and griped for a few minutes, but Cleo ignored her. She had better problems to deal with at the moment. Her phone was still ringing and she hadn't figured out how to get out of the tub yet. Cleo lifter herself up on the edge of the tub and reached for a towel. The hand she was balancing with slipped and she fell on her back in the floor. The towel fell in the wet tub. She wanted to cry, she didn't ask for this to happen to her, she hated it already. The hair dryer was sitting on the counter ready to be turned on. She pulled it down and dried herself with it. Her legs appeared and she vowed to never to take a bath again. Cleo opened the door and ran to her phone. Ten missed calls all from Emma. Cleo called her back.

Emma had long sense dried from the sun on the beach. She had stopped calling Cleo and stood looking at the water. There was a path in the sand where she had shot out of the surf. Emma didn't know she had such power within her. Speed was like a drug and Emma lived off it. You couldn't win nationals without speed. Emma wondered how she could use this to her advantage. The other teams at nationals might think she's cheating. The coach might even kick her off the team after seeing a tail. The whole school might even make fun of her. She sighed loudly and sat down. No one could ever know. Her phone rang quietly from her hand and she answered it depressed.

"Emma, we have to talk! My house now."

"I'll see if I can find Rikki." Emma signed off.

Rikki was one her way back home when she saw Emma run into the JuiceNet then back out moments later. She must be looking for Cleo, Rikki thought. It must have happened to her as well. Rikki smiled wide. She wasn't the only one anymore. She might actually make friends in this town.

"Emma, over here!" Rikki shouted. Emma turned around and ran over to her.

"I've been looking for you, come on lets go." Emma didn't want to waste any time.

"Me? You were looking for me?"

"Yeah come on, we're going to Cleo's house."

"What's your rush? We have all day." Rikki said walking slowly, seeing how far she could push Emma.

"How long have you been here?" Emma asked quickly.

"A few weeks, why?" Rikki said slowly.

"And you still don't know? Are you daft? Everyone in this area sets their sprinklers to go off in five minutes except Cleo's dad sets his to go off at nine o'clock. Now if you want to stick around and get wet that's fine with me. I'll sit in the JuiceNet until you dry off." Emma pursed her lips.

"You have a good point." Rikki picked up the pace immediately.

The third hour started the sprinklers outside. Cleo saw the others freeze for a second when they heard it start up. They were in the living room discussing what had happened earlier in the day. Rikki suggested what they were all thinking they looked like. Mermaids.

"I told you before you're not funny. Mermaids don't exist besides that's just too weird." Emma scolded.

"Cleo?" Lewis said from the front door. Cleo met him at the door and followed him to the kitchen table.

"I'm afraid I'm going to have to cancel." Cleo told him as she walked him back to the door.

"Alright, mind if I ask why?"

"Oh just something important, but not so important that you have to know." Cleo looked at her friends for back up.

"I guess I'll see you later then." Lewis scratched his head.

"Wait...what do you know about mermaids?" Cleo asked. Emma and Rikki couldn't believe what they had just heard.

"Nothing." Lewis answered.

"See you later." Cleo pushed him the rest of the way out and closed the door.

"Cleo are you insane?" Emma asked.

Cleo knew she shouldn't tell anyone. She would only become the center of some experiment. Lewis was a scientist and made sure to say so everyday. She told him everything, they were best friends. He would understand and help her change back to normal before her body odor got to bad and they forced her to take a bath. Besides what Rikki and Emma didn't know wouldn't hurt them.

End
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